

TOWN OF STEILACOOM
Pierce County, Washington
January 1, 1992 Through December 31, 1992

Schedule Of Findings

1. Municipal Court Should Follow Required Procedures

During our review of the municipal court, we noted that abstracts of court cases committed by the municipal court have not been forwarded to the director of licensing in Olympia. Approximately two hundred committed traffic citations were noted for which the abstracts had not been forwarded to Olympia.

RCW 46.52.100 requires that:

. . . every said magistrate of the court or clerk of the court of record in which such conviction was had, bail was forfeited, or the finding made shall prepare and immediately forward to the director of licensing at Olympia an abstract of the record of said court covering the case . . .

The failure of any such judicial officer to comply with any of the requirements of this section shall constitute misconduct in office and shall be grounds for removal therefrom. . . .

In addition, many of the resulting fines from the committed cases do not appear to have been collected by the municipal court. Example of such uncollected fines were noted for not only 1992 and early 1993 cases, but also for cases committed as far back as 1990.

At least \$25,000 of uncollected fines were noted during our review. The condition of the court records was such that other uncollected revenues could exist without the town's knowledge.

It appears the explanation for these problems is that the former municipal court clerk failed to adhere to the above reporting requirements and was unable to maintain the court records adequate to ensure prompt collection of fines.

The town has since forwarded many of these abstracts of judgment to the director of licensing and has begun searching their records in order to determine what fines are still owed.

We recommend the town immediately forward all remaining abstracts of judgment to the director of licensing in Olympia. We also recommend the town immediately determine the amounts owed on past-due judgments and attempt collection.